

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Owners of charter headboat (CHB) vessels **must report** landings (*i.e.*, fish kept) of the following species to the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) within 24 hours of landing at the dock:

- Blue Marlin
- White Marlin
- Sailfish
- Swordfish
- Bluefin Tuna

Landings of **marlins, sailfish, and swordfish** must be reported to NMFS by calling toll-free **1-800-894-5528**. During the call, vessel owners will be asked to provide names, contact phone numbers, HMS permit number, species caught, and size of fish. NMFS will return the call and provide a confirmation number for the reported landing.

Landings of **bluefin tuna** must be reported to NMFS by calling **1-888-872-8862** or by logging onto www.hmspermits.gov.

In Maryland and North Carolina vessel owners should report HMS landings at state-operated reporting stations. For reporting information in **Maryland**, contact **(410) 213-1531**. In **North Carolina**, contact **(800) 338-7804**. Vessel permit holders do not need to report billfish and swordfish landed in registered tournaments to the NMFS toll-free reporting line if tournament operators report landings. However, vessel permit holders are responsible for reporting tournament-related landings if tournament operators do not fulfill those requirements.

In addition, CHB operators must complete a logbook and submit cost-earnings information to NMFS, if selected.

SALE OF FISH

CHB vessels may sell sharks and swordfish **ONLY** if they also possess the respective limited access shark and swordfish handgear permits. For CHB vessels that hold the limited access shark and/or swordfish handgear permits, recreational retention limits apply when engaged in "for-hire" fishing. CHB vessels may sell tunas, including bigeye, albacore, yellowfin, and skipjack (BAYS), provided the vessel follows size and retention limits, where applicable. CHB vessels may sell bluefin tuna if they meet the commercial minimum size and retention limits and the vessel does not have any recreational sized bluefin tuna onboard the vessel (*i.e.*, < 73 inches CFL).

AUTHORIZED GEARS

Species	Authorized Gears
Billfishes	Rod & Reel
Swordfish	Rod & Reel; Handline*
Sharks	Rod & Reel; Handline*
Tunas	Rod & Reel; Handline*; Bandit Gear; Speargun

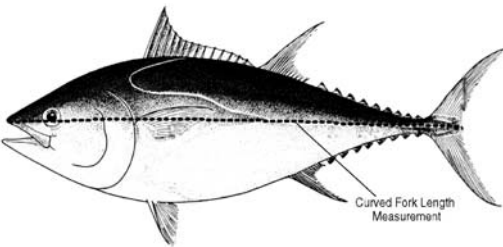
* A handline is defined as: a mainline to which no more than two gangions or hooks are attached. A handline is retrieved by hand, not by mechanical means. A mainline with 3 or more hooks is considered a longline.

SIZE AND RETENTION LIMITS

HMS retention limits vary by trip type (for-hire or non-for-hire).

Limits for for-hire HMS CHB trips			
Species		Minimum Size*	Retention Limits
Blue Marlin		99" (LJFL)	N/A
White Marlin		66" (LJFL)	N/A
Sailfish		63" (LJFL)	N/A
Longbill Spearfish		Prohibited	0
Swordfish		47" (LJFL) or, 29" (CK) or, 33 lbs dw	1/person up to 3/vessel per trip
Bigeye Tuna		27" (CFL)	N/A
Albacore Tuna		N/A	N/A
Yellowfin Tuna		27" (CFL)	3/person per day
Skipjack Tuna		N/A	N/A
Bluefin Tuna	Ang. Cat.	27" - <73" CFL	Vary in season
	Gen. Cat.	>73" CFL	Vary in season
Sharks (excluding prohibited species)		54" FL**	1/vessel per trip**

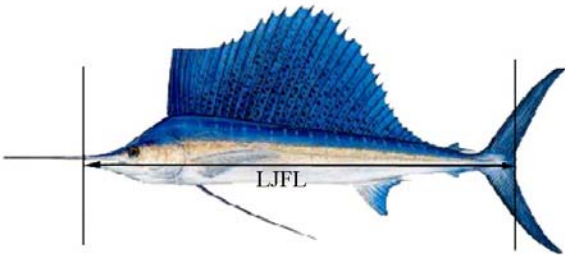
*Applies to billfish from the management unit (Atlantic Ocean) regardless of where caught; Atlantic swordfish in federal and international waters; Atlantic tunas in federal, international, and state waters (see 50 C.F.R. 635.1 for specific states); and Atlantic sharks in federal waters. Additional state regulations may also apply.
**With an allowance for one bonnethead and one Atlantic sharpnose shark per person per trip with no minimum size.



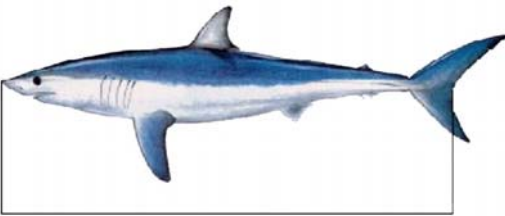
Curved Fork Length (CFL)



Cleithrum to Caudal Keel (CK)



Lower Jaw Fork Length



Fork Length (FL)

**THE HIGHLY MIGRATORY SPECIES
CHARTER/HEADBOAT VESSEL
PERMIT**

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) requires vessel permits for Atlantic Highly Migratory Species (HMS) (tunas, billfish, swordfish, and sharks) to monitor fishing effort, gain an understanding of fishery participants, distribute regulatory and other information, and collect data for management decisions. NMFS issues permits for the HMS Charter/Headboat (CHB) fishery and manages the fleet as a unique sector due to its unique mix of commercial and recreational operations. Atlantic HMS CHB permits are available by calling **1-888-872-8862** or by logging onto www.hmspermits.gov.

**WHEN DO I NEED A HMS
CHARTER/HEADBOAT PERMIT?**

Owners of vessels that carry passengers for-hire and fish for, possess, or retain Atlantic HMS must obtain an annual HMS CHB permit. NMFS defines a “for-hire” trip as a trip carrying a fee-paying passenger; or having more than three persons for a vessel licensed to carry six or fewer; or having more persons aboard than the number of crew specified on the vessel’s Certificate of Inspection for U.S. Coast Guard inspected vessels. The number of persons aboard includes the operator and crew and the retention limits would also apply to the operator and crew. While fishing for, or possessing, Atlantic HMS, the vessel operator must have a valid Merchant Marine License or Uninspected Passenger Vessel License. Because size and retention limits apply to Atlantic billfish harvested from the management unit regardless of where caught, charter/headboat vessels that catch, retain, possess, or land billfish should have an HMS Charter/Headboat permit.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q 1. May swordfish and sharks caught under a CHB category permit be sold?

A 1. Yes, swordfish and sharks may be sold by CHB vessel ONLY if the vessel also possesses the respective limited access swordfish handgear and shark commercial permits.

Q 2. May BAYS tunas caught under a CHB category permit be sold?

A 2. Yes, on for-hire trips, CHB permit holders may sell up to the recreational limits of BAYS tunas, however no recreationally caught bluefin tuna may be sold. On non-for-hire trips, there are no limits on the number of BAYS tunas that may be retained and sold.

Q 3. May billfishes (blue marlin, white marlin, sailfish, and spearfish) be retained for sale with a CHB category permit?

A 3. No. The sale of all Atlantic billfish is prohibited regardless of permit type. However, CHB vessels can retain billfish when engaged in a non for-hire trip if no commercial limits of HMS are on board.

NEED MORE INFORMATION?
www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms
www.hmspermits.gov

Tuna Issues:

HMS Gloucester 978-281-9260

Shark, Swordfish, & Permitting Issues:

HMS Headquarters 301-713-2347

Recreational Swordfish & Billfish Issues:

HMS St. Petersburg 727-824-5399

Shark & Swordfish Commercial Permit

Renewals & Transfers:

Southeast Regional Permit Office 727-824-5326

**Atlantic Tuna, HMS Angling, and HMS CHB
Category Permits:**

NMFS Permit Shop 888-872-8862

**Atlantic Highly
Migratory Species
Charter/Headboat
Vessel Permit &
Reporting
Requirements**



**National Marine Fisheries
Service**

Office of Sustainable Fisheries
Highly Migratory Species Management
Division

National Marine Fisheries Service
Highly Migratory Species Management
Div.1315 East-West Highway
Silver Spring, MD 20901

This pamphlet provides a summary of HMS charter/headboat permit regulations as of October 2006. For the complete and official set of regulations, see 50 CFR part 635 and the Federal Register or call the Highly Migratory Species Management Division at 301-713-2347. If there is a discrepancy between the regulations in 50 CFR part 635 and this brochure, the regulations will take precedence. This brochure is produced in compliance with Section 212 of the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act.